

go into all the world and preach the distinguishing acts, state or doctrines of all the *isms* in the world? The answer must be an emphatic, *No Sir!* If these are not what they were to preach they cannot possibly be the *Gospel*. If they do not constitute the Gospel, and a person with all the sincerity of mind, heart and purpose should believe the preaching deduced from any one of these *isms*, would that believing make any one of these *isms* the *Gospel* of the Commission? It would not. That cannot be possible.

If the foregoing conclusions are true, as they undoubtedly are, the believing of the person referred to would not constitute the first condition of salvation. But in order to salvation we must preach *the Gospel* and the unsaved must believe *the Gospel*. Not some gospel, not a gospel, but *the Gospel*. Hear Paul, Gal. 1:8, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accused." We must be careful in this matter. Eternal realities are connected with this, or *the Gospel*. Destiny of souls hang suspended upon the knowledge and obedience to its requirements.

Gospel is generally defined, "as good news," "a joyful message." These definitions give us the character of a Gospel, or of some Gospel, but *the Gospel* of the commission is not any good news, or any joyful message; but "*the Gospel*." We turn to Paul's letter to the Romans 1:1, we have the words, "*Gospel of God*." 16th verse of the same chapter reads as follows, "For I am not ashamed of *the Gospel* of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

In Eph. 1:12, He calls it, "The Gospel of your salvation." This tells us what kind of a Gospel it is as to its power and benefit. Suppose the apostles on the day of Pentecost would all have stood up and preached saying, we are endowed with the Holy Spirit, we are here preaching "*the Gospel*," we are authorized to preach *the Gospel*, we have been and are the disciples of the man Christ Jesus, you have taken him and wickedly have slain him. God raised him from the dead, we are his witnesses, we are his apostles, etc. Now one begins to preach Calvinism, another one Armenianism, others Presbyterianism, Methodism, Universalism, Ingersolism, etc. Is there any probability that that Pentecostal revival would have gathered about three thousand souls? Evidently it would not. The devout men were intelligent men. They would have mused over the case like this. They all make the same profession; they all speak of

one Gospel; they all talk in one name, but there is no harmony in what they ask us to believe. The doctrine of one is at variance with the doctrine of the other. Then they do not agree about what we are to practice. All will agree that this would have been wrong and detrimental to the cause on the day of Pentecost, and the apostles as ministers would have been a failure. If this would not be preaching *the Gospel* on the day of Pentecost it evidently is not now—and if the apostles would have been failures as preachers of *the Gospel* of God or of Jesus for such conduct, how can they be anything else now.

The apostles knew what their Lord and Savior meant by *the Gospel*, and they knew what they were to do and they did it. The word Gospel as good news or as a joyful message, has in it the idea of something historical, the idea of relating and the idea of the thing uttered. Some time in the past the reader will doubtless remember we dwelt at considerable length upon Peter's sermon at Pentecost. We will not repeat our statements here, but if the reader will look it up he will notice that Peter had much to say historically, that he made or delivered a narrative, and that narrative contained news,—had a joyful message for all that accepted of it. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is a revelation of God to fallen man—is of grace—has a history or narrative of the conception, birth, life, actions, death, resurrection, ascension; and of the doctrines of Jesus Christ with invitations and promises based upon the conditions of the covenant of grace.

We have now learned what is to be preached and believed. We will hear what Paul has to say in addition to what we have already listened to. Rom. 10:8, 9. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." The reader will please make a note of the fact that there is no man-made *ism* in the positions so far presented. All is founded upon facts stated in the word of God. But the reader may still exclaim all is not clear yet. I am still confused as it regards my duty in selecting a home religiously. I know not where to go. I still see written upon the forehead of Christendom,—*Mystery—The Great Babylon*.

"Christ's cross is the sweetest burden that ever I bore; it is such a burden as wings are to a bird, or sails to a ship, to carry me forward to my harbor."

ALPHA AND OMEGA.

C. H. BALSBAUGH.

My dear brother: Christ is confined to no dispensation. Take Christ out of the Old Testament and there is not a syllable left. Luke 24:27. Your reading of Rom. 10:4 is sectional. It omits the radical idea of the Decalogue. Christ is indeed "the end of the law for righteousness" as a result of our obedience. But where did Christ get his righteousness from which is imputed to our faith? See Rom. 5:16 19 and Matt. 5:17. All the righteousness that will avail us in life, and death, and the final judgment, is law-righteousness, but it is ours only through the mediation of Jesus Christ. Phil. 3:9.

The probation in Eden was an individual test. That at Mount Sinai was national. And yet both were seminal enough in character and extent to include the race. "Thou shalt" and "thou shalt not." This is the nucleus of all government, divine and human, for time and eternity. One specific commandment, or one prohibition, is sufficient to test our loyalty. In principle there is nothing in the law, nor in the Gospel, that was not in the simple injunction in Eden. Obedience to that one expression of the Divine Will would have secured the blessing of a larger revelation of the love and purpose of God. Eden was the blade; Sinai was the ear; Calvary was the full corn in the ear. Christ is the whole of divine revelation. "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Col. 2:9. In Him we have our Genesis and consummation. The word "*complete*" in Col. 2:10 needs Eternity for its full definition. Even now we are as He is. I John 4:17. But "we shall see greater things." Compare John 1:50 and I John 3:2. Even "these vile bodies" will be changed that they "may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." Phil. 3:21. Is it not eminently reasonable that we should have such preliminaries as I Cor. 6:19, 20 and Rom. 12:1 and I Thess. 5:23? We must be "pure even as He is pure."

Somehow the tobacco habit, and all other carnal lustings and indulgences, must be eradicated before we can enter the Gates of Pearl. No grudge, or any form of bitterness or malice or selfishness can ever pass through those crystal doors. There is no excuse for defalcation as we have the Godman for our surety and the Holy Ghost for our Sanctifier. Rom. 8:34 and John 16:13, 14. The church has always been in peril of being swamped in ritual and tradition, in depreciation of the weightier matters of the law. "Wash ye one another's feet" is a positive injunction. How easily it is done. Iscariot